POLITENESS MADE HIM RICH.

A True Romance of a Ride Uptown in an "L" Train, with a Moral for Everybody.

If this story of the splendid reward that followed a single act of politeness upon the part of a young man to an elderly fellow passenger on a crowded elevated train in New York City were written as a piece of fiction it would be dismissed either as conventional or improbable, or with the comment that it is a good story to tell to children.

Yet this is a true story of the rise of a struggling young mechanic to the position of partner in an extensive tobacco business, an income of $10,000 a year, and a happy marriage with the favorite niece of a wealthy manufacturer, all through the fact that on a particular evening he performed a simple act of courtesy that was only in keeping with his rule of life.

Max S. Jacoby is the name of the young man and M. W. Mendle, of Mendle Brothers, an old and influential tobacco importing house, was the generous patron in the romantic story. The place of business of the Mendles and of Mr. Jacoby is at No. 19 Bowery, where it has been for forty years.

One ugly night several years ago a northbound Third avenue elevated train was crowded to the point of discomfort. Mr. Jacoby, who had boarded the train at the City Hall station, had abandoned his effort to decipher the scare headlines in his evening paper by the light of Uncle Russell Sage's "good, old-fashioned oil." Just as the train pulled out at Chatham square, he glanced up and beheld a white-haired gentleman hanging to a strap. Without a word Mr. Jacoby arose and said: "Take this seat, sir."

Mr. Mendle declined, or rather politely demurred, but the young man placed his hands in a playful way on the other's shoulders, and gently forced him into the vacant seat.

At Fifty-ninth street a number of passengers got out, and there was a vacant seat by the side of the old man, into which the younger dropped. In the conversation that sprung up between them the young man, in reply to an inquiry, said that he, with a single partner, were at the time engaged in the manufacture of cigar boxes in a small way, although his trade was also that of a cigar packer. "I may be able to give you some business," said the old man, as he produced a business card, "for I am somewhat in your line myself."

Young Jacoby recognized the name of one of the leading c'gar and tobacco concerns of the city, and in the gentleman with whom he was talking a reputed leader in the then all-powerful cigar trust. From that time the elder took a great liking to the frank, ingenuous and cheery young mechanic, and gave him orders for boxes. Subsequently the young man was taken into the employ of the concern in a small way, the position paying no more than he had been able to eke out at the box-making, which was not in excess of $1,000 a year.

It was while on some business in the office of his employer one day that Jacoby first saw the young lady who was afterward to become his wife. An introduction did not immediately follow, but a year later Jacoby was strolling through the brilliantly lighted aisles of the Hebrew charity fair, when he was called into the box of the Mendles and there introduced to the young woman, whose image had long been impressed upon his heart.

On that occasion he asked for and received permission to call upon her, and was shortly afterward admitted as a regular visitor to one of a handsome row of brownstone dwellings on 106th street, just east of Park avenue. This was a case of true love and its course ran smooth. In due time the young folks arrived at an understanding which they agreed the elder Mendle could transform into a blissful condition.

The aspiring lover had not yet screwed his courage up to the point of asking the wealthy uncle to give him his favorite niece, when, to his astonishment, one evening the old man entered the parlor and suggested that the young man take a walk with him in Central Park. They strolled over the winding paths in silence for a while and at last the elder broke the silence by saying: "You have it in mind, I believe, to honor me by a proposition to enter my family as a member of it."

"Oh, you make it easy for me, sir," said the young man. "I was at a loss how to begin."

"Precisely. You understand that she is my favorite niece! Perhaps you have heard that I have it in my mind to make her my heiress." The young man only murmured that they loved each other. "Precisely, but in what manner do you expect to care for her?"

"I have saved from my wages a few hundred dollars, enough to furnish a modest flat. I have my trade and my health. My habits are good. I shall not always be poor. She and I have talked it over."

"Very good. Now, what do you expect me to do for her." This was said in a tone that caused the young man's heart to sink, but he replied bravely: "That is your affair. I have not allowed it to enter my thoughts. I am prepared to make a home and maintain it. She knows what my projects are."

"Well, then, if that is the case, Max, my boy, I will tell you what I will do. There are two houses on One Hundred and Sixth street. They are worth from $15,000 to $20,000 each. On the wedding day I shall make them over to my niece. You shall live in one, reserving me a room. The rental of the other will help to pay the household expenses. I shall also place at her disposal the interest on a trust fund of $25,000. I shall expect you to remain with me and attend to my real estate and other outside business, and your salary shall be —— thousand dollars. Now we will go back to the house, and you can repeat what I have said."

The young man trod on air as he returned to the brownstone house, where a much agitated young woman awaited him. The old gentleman stood in the centre of the room and completed a pretty tableau, with "Bless you, my children," or words to that effect.

The wedding was celebrated at a fashionable synagogue, and the young man settled down to business. He was not spoiled by his good fortune, but worked as energetically as ever, and when he was finally taken into the firm, the commercial associates of the Mendles pronounced it a good stroke of business.

A Journal reporter called upon Mr. Jacoby and his charming wife in their splendidly equipped home, which has been blessed by the arrival of children. He was loath to discuss the story of his courtship and the events that make it possible. I did nothing," he said, "when I met Mr. Mendle that I had not always done in the presence of my elders. It so happened that it led to an acquaintance that has, I hope, proved mutually agreeable. I want no notoriety. Our friends know our story, and it is not much of a story at that, yet if its telling should bear good fruit and result even in the slightest improvement in the conduct of people toward each other, when sharing a public discomfort, we have no objection."

SOME RARE OLD BOOKS.

Recent Acquisitions to the New York Public Library of Colonial Literature.

Mr. John S. Kennedy, one of the trustees of the New York Public Library, the consolidation of the Astor, Lenox and Tilden Libraries, has added to previous generous deeds by presenting to the library the entire library of Dr. Thomas Addis Emmet. Two years ago the Lenox Library purchased Dr. Emmet's splendid collection of Colonial newspapers. To this is now added the library of 5,000 volumes, the priceless feature of which is a collection of 122 extra illustrated volumes bearing upon the history of the United States. As the library also has the collection of the late George Bancroft, it will be for all time the Mecca of the American historian.

Dr. Emmet spent over fifty years in making the collection. Among its treasures are the following: "The History of New York," by the late Miss Booth, extended from two octavo volumes to eight folio volumes by the addition of 3,830 illustrations, of which 2,304 are autographs.

Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution," extended from two 8vo volumes to twelve folio volumes by 3,880 illustrations, of which 2,443 are autographs, 98 portraits, 346 views, 31 newspapers, 11 maps, etc.

The original manuscript of Francis's "Old New York," extended from one volume to five by the addition of 1,169 illustrations, 84 autographs, 796 portraits, etc.

"Generals of the Revolution," extended from two 12mo vols. to eight folio vols. by 1,538 illustrations, 523 portraits, 69 maps, etc.

Original account rendered by Paul Jones to Mr. Jefferson, the American Minister to France, with two signed autograph letters of Paul Jones and 12 illustrations.

"History of the Mason and Dixon Line," 166 illustrations, with original order from Lord Baltimore directing Mason and Dixon to make the survey, 41 autographs of William Penn, etc.

"Minutes of a Court of Inquiry upon the Case of Major Andre," with copies of papers found upon him.

Benjamin Franklin autograph signed letters on "Smoking Chimneys."

Irving's "Life of Washington," extended to five volumes, containing the original will leaving the estate of Mount Vernon to his brother, the original contract for the building of Washington's tomb, nine autograph signed letters of Washington, and one of the only two extant autographs of Washington's mother.

WOMANLY MODESTY.

This Applicant for Work Requires a Large Salary, Travel and Plenty of Sport.

Through the advertising columns of an English newspaper a woman of birth, who is unhappily reduced to the necessity of earning a living, states her requirements in the following thorough fashion:

"A lady, highly educated and very well connected, and writing and reading French fluently, also good reader, cheerful, bright and patient, wishes to be a secretary to a nobleman or military man between fifty and sixty; she is used to travelling, and prefers it part of the year; good salary and all expenses to be paid; country preferred, and a gentleman who is fond of riding and driving; she has been used to luxurious homes in India and England, but never out before; must be a refined man in tastes and habits, and an intellectual man; literary man not objected to; personal interview and highest references given and required; the lady is also very good at nursing, and highly conscientious and painstaking; would undertake charge of a delicate lad, living on a country estate, or to travel with him; Swiss, Cannes, mountains preferred, or south of France or Aix-les-Bains; she could undertake to ride and drive with him, any one requiring outdoor, healthy exercise, etc.; must be a perfect gentleman by birth, education and tastes, and no one with a tendency for vicious habits, either of gambling, drinking or otherwise; he would receive devoted attention and care, or she would take the place of a mother to him or superintend his studies under a tutor; English, American, Swedish or Russian not objected to; no Spaniard, Frenchman or Italian need apply. Address Mme. ——. She can speak and write and read fluently, is musical and artistic, also has been a great rider; had fourteen to eighteen, son of nobleman or military man preferred; unexceptional references given and required; no idiots, epileptics or consumptives undertaken. Address Mme. ——, etc."

POLLY ON A BIKE.

A Trained Parrot That Rides the Bicycle Holding on with Beak and Claws.

Now the winged steed has captured the winged creation. In Paris at one of the theatres the latest in the way of bicycle trick riding is done by parrots. A parrot is put upon a tiny wheel of the exact pattern of those ridden by human beings. He grasps the handle bar in his beak and with his claws gets a good grip on the pedals.

The wings are clipped so that he must depend solely on his leg power for locomotion. He rides about a little table furnished with a raised rim, to keep the feathered pedaller from taking a header over the edge. The parrot rides around apparently much at his ease, now and then giving vent to a hoarse cry of joy.

After several spins around the table, the bird is dismounted and placed upon another wheel, this one having hollow tires to fit a wire. A wire is then swung across the whole length of the room. The bicycle and parrot are put on it, and at a signal Polly works his legs and at full speed a la Blondin traverses the hall amid enthusiastic applause. To keep the equilibrium a second parrot is put on a trapeze underneath the frame and seems to enjoy the free ride immensely.

M. MASSENET COMING HERE.

Greatest Living French Composer Personally and Artistically Considered.

M. Massenet, who, since the death of Gounod and Ambroise Thomas, holds the first place in the illustrious ranks of French composers, has decided to come to America, and in the near future Americans will have the pleasure of hearing "Manon," "Le Cid," "La Navarraise," conducted by the great composer himself, who wields the baton with a masterly hand.

"Je voudrais bien aller en Amerique," said M. Massenet, just before he left France, and he voices the universal sentiment of the European artistic world.

Apparently, every one in it seems to want to come to America. The day has gone by when foreign artists are content with success in their own countries. "Il faut aller en Amerique"—One must go to America—is the universal cry, and American success has grown to mean as much to an artist upon returning to Europe, as the reclame of their triumphs in their native lands meant to them before coming here.

The greatest artists seem to appreciate another important thing—that Americans are discerning and discriminating in their judgment, apt to estimate artistic excellence from a standpoint of absolute merit. Famous names, unless well carried, do not take the public in America. It is what artists are, not what they have been.

M. Massenet is best known to Americans through "Manon" and "La Navarraise," both of which were given last season in New York, when "Manon" was splendidly interpreted by Mme. Melba and M. Jean De Reszke, and "La Navarraise" by Mme. Calve, for whom M. Massenet wrote the opera.

The music of "Manon" is more suggestive of Massenet, the man who is gay, bright and original, and the exceedingly gloomy, terrible, pathetic lyric drama "La Navarraise" somehow does not seem to belong to him at all.

There are few busier men in Paris than M. Jules Massenet, as he is called—though he himself rather disclaims the "Jules." "Je suis Massenet tout court," he says, and simply "Massenet" he always signs himself.

In addition to his work as a composer, a work which keeps him constantly occupied, he has a large class in compositions at the Conservatoire, and when a great singer is about to appear in one of his operas Massenet himself undertakes the coaching for the role.

He devoted a whole Summer to rehearsing the opera of "Manon" with Mme. Melba, going daily to her house in Paris, where he played her accompaniment and carefully taught her exactly how he wanted his music sung.

In the role of "coach" M. Massenet is seen at his best. He is intensely interested in the work of the singer and plays as if inspired. His whole heart and soul he gives to the task. When the interpretation of a passage particularly pleases him, he is enthusiastic and unstinted in his praise.

While rehearsing Mme. Melba he would frequently interrupt the music by applause. "Bravo! Melba," he would say, turning round to smile upon her and show his pleasure, "c'est tout a fait bien." And then, as if recollecting himself, he would resume the passage with "Continuons," and the lesson would go on only to be again interrupted with the composer's "Bravos."

Massenet's music seems especially suited to Mme. Melba's voice, and he has written a number of things for her. In this he has shown marked good judgment, for his "Sevillana" from "Don Caesar de Bazan," which he adapted from the orchestral part particularly for Mme. Melba, has made a great hit this season, and wherever the great diva has sung it she has had one of the triumphs of her career. The music of "Sevillana" is gay, fantastic and original. It is a song of fascination and delight, of love and festivity. Vivacity, ardor, longing are all expressed in it and the public seem to like the combination.

M. Massenet kindly wrote a part of the score of "Sevillana" for me and underneath added, in French: "Ah, this Sevillana, but one must hear it sung by Melba—it is then enchanting, a joy."

At home M. Massenet is one of the most cordial and hospitable of men, and Mme. Massenet, his charming wife, gracefully shares the honors of the place with him. Works of art abound in the Massenet salon and throughout the house, to say nothing of the souvenir gifts from royalty and the tokens of appreciation from artistic friends.

One of the most interesting rooms in his "maison" is, of course, his study, where many of his songs and operas have been written. It is handsomely and comfortably furnished in antique style of furniture, set off by rich rugs and hangings. Artistic vases, filled with fresh plants and flowers, give a bright, homelike air to the apartment and suggest the country, which M. Massenet loves and where he is always happy.

In appearance M. Massenet is a well-built, striking looking man whose face suggests an intensely artistic nature. He seems to unconsciously know the effect of a good pose and possesses the happy knack of always falling into a graceful attitude.

He is merry, with a keen sense of the humorous, and his amiability and gallantry have made him a great favorite with the fair sex, for he is an adept at turning a pretty phrase or paying a delicate compliment.

Like the majority of modern French composers, M. Massenet prefers for the subject of his opera stirring incidents from contemporaneous history. In these he seems to find more inspiration than in the myths and legends, the favorite themes of Richard Wagner and his followers. The real, not the ideal world, appeals most to Jules Massenet.

As he is one of the best representatives of the modern school of composers his reply to the questions of what he thought was the modern trend of opera, and, in his opinion, what he considered the duty of the artist to the composer, cannot fail to be of interest, for they show his characteristic humor and how closely he dodged a direct answer.

After reflecting for some time upon the two interesting questions, he replied:

"Your questions embrace everything I endeavor to teach the students who are members of my class of musical composition at the Conservatoire."

GRACE CORNEAN.